

Department of Rehabilitation Services
67 Prospect Avenue, 3rd Floor
Hartford, CT 06106-2980

Advisory Board Meeting: April 6, 2015
Minutes

Members in Attendance: Luisa Sobeleski, Mary Silvestri, Jeff Bravin, Harvey Corson , Amy Mirizzi, Jane Whitehead, Lewis Letang, Carl Moeller, Mary Lynch

Members Not Present: Sandra McGee, John Lamb, Terri-Lynn Johnston, Colleen Hayles, Matt Ranelli, Bill Rivera, Bernice Zampano

DORS Staff Present: Commissioner Amy Porter, Patti Clay, Khampasong Khantivong, Sara Gerhold, Maryann Dayton-Fitzgerald, Andrew Norton, Patricia Clark, Melissa Dennis-Duchscherer

Guests Present: None

Interpreters: Mary Sue Owens, Cyndi Ward

CART Reporter: None

Call to Order, Acceptance of Agenda, Minutes and Adjournment Time:

Meeting was called to order by Luisa Soboleski at 1:40 PM. Current meeting agenda was accepted. Minutes from November were accepted. Minutes from February were also accepted. It was mentioned that draft minutes shouldn't be public until approved.

New members Dr. Carl Moeller, ENT and Lewis Latange, DOL were introduced. Members present introduced themselves to the new members.

DORS Report

Commissioner Amy Porter and Patti Clay gave the agency report on current personnel and agency updates. The Interpreter survey has gone out through Colleen Hayles at the Department of Education.

Detail provided on the move to Windsor Avenue – it is located on a bus line. The building has a security guard. DHOH will be co-located with other BRS units, and will have a new address (forthcoming).

Advisory Board information will now be on the DORS website, link here - <http://www.cdhi.ct.gov/cdhi/cwp/view.asp?a=2603&Q=335634&PM=1&cdhiNav=1>.

Information will be provided in three sections representing DHOH services on the DORS website. For the Advisory Board, information will include meeting dates for 2015, member lists, agendas, minutes, DHOH reports, and Legislative Updates.

Action: There was a request for past minutes and agendas from 2012-2014. They will be posted on the website.

It was suggested there be a member list for meetings, where members can just initial to verify their attendance.

Interpreting Services - Sara Gerhold gave the Interpreting Services report and indicated they are still recruiting for an office assistant – interviews to be set up. The office is otherwise fully staffed. One interpreter is retiring, so they will be down that number. Interpreters are currently serving clients in a variety of settings including universities, and expect a busy season in May due to Commencement.

Further questions were asked about the physical location for the Interpreting Unit who will be moving to Windsor Avenue and co-located with the Bureau of Education and Services for the Blind and the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services. Questions were asked regarding other agencies being in the same location. DSS will also be in this location. When asked about the current 5-year lease for DHOH, Commissioner Porter indicated that was a matter for the Department of Administrative Services.

Counseling Services - Maryann Dayton-Fitzgerald handed out a report sheet. The unit has had 25 meetings, 76 counseling sessions, provided 121 general case management services, and responded to 54 inquiries.

In response to a question about typical inquiries, hearing aid information and funding sources were noted. The counseling unit typically provides a list of resources.

Action: a list of hearing aid resources will be posted to the DORS/DHOH website.

Legislative Report –

Andrew Norton gave legislative updates –

HB 5525- AN ACT CONCERNING CYTOMEGALOVIRUS

This bill is moving along and has been passed by committee

HB 234- AN ACT REQUIRING HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR THE PURCHASE OF ASSISTANCE DOGS

This bill has been passed by committee, but has a fiscal note attached, which may make it more difficult for final approval

HB 6805- AN ACT CONCERNING THE BIRTH-TO-THREE PROGRAM AND HEARING TESTS

This bill has been passed by committee – there were questions questions/discussion on this bill. More clarification will be sought.

HB- 6941- AN ACT CONCERNING STATE AGENCY INTERPRETER SERVICES

This bill will require state agencies to come to the DORS Interpreting Unit first to fill interpreting needs. This bill had passed out of committee.

HB 6765- AN ACT CONCERNING INTERPRETER QUALIFICATIONS

This bill has passed out of committee and defines for specific settings for interpreting. This bill has no fiscal impact.

4 Settings of Interpreting

1. Education
2. Legal
3. Community Setting
4. Medical

Questions on this bill included concerns about school systems ignoring the bill and legal recourse for parents. Harvey Corson handed out a one-page summary. OCOSD, CRID, P&A are all organizations in support of the Interpreter bill. Advisory board members asked if they could submit a letter or document in support these bills.

Action: Patti will find out if advisory board members can submit letters or other documents in support of current legislation.

Old Business

No old business

New Business

No new business

Announcements

Amy Mirizzi provided information about the Connecticut rollout for “Guide by Your Side” from the National Hands and Voices. Three parent guides have been hired and information about the CT-Hands & Voices can be found at: <http://www.handsandvoices.org/gbys/contacts.htm>

Harvey Corson provided information about the upcoming Legislative Brunch

Lisa Soboleski provided information about a Time Capsule that was buried at ASD 95 years ago and will be unveiled at 10:30 AM Friday, April 10, 2015, with live streaming video. The box itself looks like an old-fashioned milk carton. Three students will give presentations that this event.

Guest Speakers

None

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 2:55 PM.

Next Meeting

June meeting will be held at DHOH on Prospect Avenue. September meeting details to be announced.